

On the GREAT EXHIBITION of 1851.

Nos. XVII. and XVIII.

OF

OCCASIONAL SERMONS,

PREACHED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY,

BY

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SERMON XVII.

ON THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF THE INDUSTRY OF ALL
NATIONS, 1851¹.

GENESIS xxviii. 16.

Surely the Lord is in this place.

WHEN the Heathen Mistress of the ancient world celebrated her Secular Games, occurring once in a hundred and ten years, the voice of a Herald proclaimed their inauguration with the solemn words—"Come and see Games which no one living hath seen, and which no one living will see again²." The periodic recurrence of these Games, century after century, marked the progress of the Nation. They were also a Religious Jubilee. Lyrical Hymns were chanted in honour of those whom Rome invoked as her tutelary deities, and their protection was implored for the public weal.

A voice has gone forth from our own Metropolis, inviting the Inhabitants of this Realm, and addressing itself to all Nations of the World; and that voice proclaims to all, "Come and behold a spectacle, such as no man living hath witnessed, and such, as in all human likelihood, few who are now alive will witness again."

¹ Preached at Westminster Abbey, on Sunday, July 6, 1851.

² "Convenite ad ludos spectandos quos neque spectavit quisquam neque spectaturus est." Suet. Claud. 21.

The Secular Games of the Heathen City were, as has been said, a religious Festival, celebrated with religious observances. The magnificent Spectacle now unfolded to the eyes of the World, in this Metropolitan City, to which all Nations have been bidden as guests, is not expressly of a sacred character, it does not bear a religious title, it is called the "GREAT EXHIBITION of the INDUSTRY of all Nations."

But assuredly, we should greatly err; we should much misconceive its meaning; we should ill appreciate the design of those who have originated and executed this unprecedented work; we should forget the solemn office of Prayer by which it was consecrated to God; we should forfeit precious privileges to be derived from it, if we looked upon it only as a secular event, and did not contemplate it in its religious aspect.

Many there are who have dilated eloquently on its temporal tendencies, many have discoursed with just enthusiasm on the almost magical rapidity with which this fairy building has sprung into life, and with which it has been prodigally decked with Oriental wealth and splendour. Many have rejoiced in the fact, that by its means, fame and reward will be dispensed to those who have benefited mankind by their works, and that what a Poet¹ had imagined as a dream of Elysium, is thus realized on Earth. Many have pronounced well merited eulogies on the marvellous re-

¹ Virg. *Æn.* vi. 660—666 :—

Hic manus, ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi :
 Quique sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat :
 Quique pii vates, et Phœbo digna locuti :
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes :
Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo :
 Omnibus his niveâ cinguntur tempora vittâ.

sults of human Intelligence and human Industry, which are amassed in that rich treasure-house, and have enlarged copiously on the benefits which may accrue to the human race from this fraternal confederacy of all Nations in promoting the Arts of Peace.

But in the House of God, my Brethren, we have a different duty to perform. We must resign the *secular* elements of this subject to be illustrated by others. We Christian men, must look at this wonderful spectacle in its bearings on Christianity. And we, Christian Ministers, should be ill discharging our duty, if we did not endeavour to aid our hearers in contemplating this great event in a religious light, and to derive from it such religious instruction as it is admirably qualified to convey.

Let us thus consider this topic; which it is my purpose to treat on the present and a future occasion.

I. It would be a low and degrading error, to regard this splendid display of the world's Industry as a mere Mart of Commerce, or Emporium of Trade, or as a vast Bazaar, subsidiary to man's physical comforts, and ministerial to his animal appetites. Nor would it be less erroneous, to view it as a theatric Show and gorgeous Pageant, designed to excite the curiosity and to dazzle the eye of the beholder.

The admonitory language of the great Founder of our English School of Philosophy may supply a sage protest against such conceptions as these; and may be heard with profit here. He is speaking of the *erroneous* aims, with which the Arts and Sciences are sometimes cultivated; and his words are applicable as a corrective of the false notions with which the *productions* of Science and Art are often viewed.

"The greatest error of all," he says, "is the mis-

taking or misplacing of the last, or furthest, end of Knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of Learning and Knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite, sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight, sometimes for ornament and reputation, and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction, and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of Reason to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in Knowledge a Couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a Terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a Tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a Fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a Shop for profit or sale; and *not* a rich Store-house *for the glory of the CREATOR*, and the relief of man's estate¹."

First, "*For the glory of the CREATOR*," and, next, "*For the relief of man's estate*." These memorable words might well have been inscribed on the principal portal of this Industrial Palace; and they supply a fitting key-note for the emotions and reflections which it inspires.

II. A second caution arising from the former, may be suggested here.

Some, there are, who appear to measure the *progress* of a Nation by its advancement in mechanical skill and material arts. They regard this great Industrial Spectacle as practical evidence that the human race is advancing to *perfection*; and they look forward with sanguine hopes to some glorious epoch, in which the

¹ Bacon's Advancement of Learning, book i. p. 46.

human Intellect will develop itself in a boundless expansion, and bestow new privileges, of peace, happiness, and dignity, on the family of man.

Such persons need to be warned of the evil inseparably inherent in all things human and earthly. They ought to be reminded of the consequences of our natural corruption, which will surely mock all who indulge in such enthusiastic hopes and illusory dreams, and who pursue the vain phantom of human perfectibility. They ought also to be taught,—what Experience and Revelation testify,—that an era of a Nation's most rapid progress in the mechanical arts, and a period of its most brilliant splendour in material achievements, may be also the epoch of its decay in what is noblest and most glorious, and may be precursive of, and even preparatory to, its moral and social decline, degradation, and dissolution.

The reason of this is obvious. Mechanical Arts minister to *private* as well as to public ends. They provide more comforts at a cheaper rate for the *bodies* of men. And,—unless we are carefully on our guard, and are fortified against their seductions by the masculine simplicity and enlarged affections and sublime devotion of the Gospel,—these mechanical arts tempt us to busy ourselves about physical enjoyments; they allure us to place our happiness in our own ease; and render us dissatisfied, sullen, captious, and morose, when any thing interferes with our personal comfort, or calls upon us to make a personal sacrifice. Thus they engender selfishness. They sap the foundations of Patriotism. They raise the Individual above the Community. They resolve Society into Units. . . . This forebodes the dissolution of a State. . . . We know that the era of the greatest glory of the most illustrious Nations of Antiquity was when men lived hardy and frugal lives, and when the

houses of their greatest citizens were plain and ordinary dwellings¹; when men thought nothing of themselves, except in relation to the State. But when Luxury increased, then they thought of the State only in relation to themselves: and then the State was lost, and they perished with it.

III. Besides, this subject ought to be considered in its relation to ALMIGHTY GOD, from Whom alone all Power and Skill comes.

Success in the mechanical arts too often engenders idolatry of self.

Now God declares Himself to be a *jealous God*, Who will not *give His honour to another*. And He chastises men and Nations who trust in their own power, and seek their own glory. He denounces woe on those who make *flesh their arm*², and adore the work of their own hands; who *sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag*³. King Asa is censured because he *sought to the physicians, and not to the Lord*⁴. Because King Hezekiah vaingloriously displayed his treasures to the Babylonish ambassadors, those treasures were carried to Babylon⁵. Because King Nebuchadnezzar's heart was lifted up, and he proudly exclaimed, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built*⁶?

¹ Demosth. *περὶ συντάξ.* 174. 25. τὴν Θεμιστοκλέους καὶ τὴν Κίμωνος καὶ τὴν Ἀριστείδου καὶ Μιλτιάδου καὶ τῶν τότε λαμπρῶν οἰκίαν εἰ τις ἄρ' οἶδεν ὅποια πόρ' ἐστίν, ὅρᾳ τῆς τοῦ γείτονος οὐδὲν σεμνοτέραν οὔσαν. Cp. Horat. Od. ii. xv. 13. "Privatus illis census erat brevis, Commune magnum," &c. The result of increased luxury is described by Cicero; men cared but little for the Commonwealth if they could but keep their own fish-ponds (Cic. ad Att. i. 18, and i. 19); or, as Lord Bacon expresses it, did not mind what became of "the Vessel of the State, if they could but escape in the cock-boat of their own fortunes."

² Jer. xvii. 5.

³ Hab. i. 16.

⁴ 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

⁵ 2 Kings xx. 13—17. Isa. xxxix. 2.

⁶ Dan. iv. 30.

he was bereft of reason, and driven from the city to herd with the beasts of the field. Because Herod gave not God the glory¹, he is eaten with worms and dies.

Where, then, is the man among us, whose feelings of exultation, in contemplating the glorious spectacle before us in that Industrial Palace, may not well be chastened with sober thoughts, and even by foreboding fears, for our own beloved Country?

Bear with me, I beseech you, while I thus speak. Suffer me to warn you against being dazzled with the glare of what flashes on the eye. Look not on the surface, but beneath it. Let us be grateful to God for all the comforts we enjoy in our bodies and soul. Let us praise HIM for all our wealth and power and glory, for they are all derived from Him and Him alone; and let us be on our guard against overweening self-gratulations, and self-confident vauntings, and too sanguine aspirations. Let us temper them with that alone which can preserve us from falling victims to our own greatness,—I mean, Christian Humility, Christian Faith, Christian Thankfulness, and Christian Love. Let us bow the knee before Christ, *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*². Let us present our treasures to Him, as the wise men of the East did theirs at His cradle in Bethlehem³. Let us *trust in the Lord with all our heart, and lean not in our own understanding. In all our ways let us acknowledge Him, and He shall direct our paths*⁴.

IV. Let me enforce these cautions by the words of one to whom a grateful homage of public admiration is about to be paid by the erection of a monument in this place:—

¹ Acts xii. 23.

³ Matt. ii. 11.

² Rev. xix. 16.

⁴ Prov. iii. 5, 6.

“In many parts of Europe (and especially in our own country) men have been pressing forward, for some time, in a path which has betrayed by its fruitfulness; furnishing them constant employment for picking up things about their feet, when thoughts were perishing in their minds. While Mechanic Arts, Manufactures, Commerce, and all those products of knowledge which are confined to definite and tangible objects, have, with the aid of experimental Philosophy, been every day putting on more brilliant colours, the splendour of the Imagination has been fading; Sensibility, which was formerly a generous nursling of rude Nature, has been chased from its ancient range in the wide domain of Patriotism and Religion with the weapons of derision by a shadow calling itself Good Sense: calculations of presumptuous Expediency—groping its way among partial and temporary consequences—have been substituted for the dictates of paramount Conscience, the supreme embracer of consequences: lifeless and circumspect Decencies have banished the graceful negligence and unsuspecting dignity of Virtue.

“The progress of these Arts also, by furnishing such attractive stores of outward accommodation, has misled the higher orders of society in their more disinterested exertions for the service of the lower. Animal comforts have been rejoiced over, *as if they were the end of being*. A neater and more fertile garden; a greener field; implements and utensils more apt; a dwelling more commodious and better furnished;—let these be attained, say the actively benevolent, and we are sure, not only of being in the right road, but of having *successfully terminated our journey*. Now a Country may advance, for some time, in this course with apparent profit; these accommodations, by zealous encouragement, may be attained; and still the Peasant or Artizan, their master, may be a slave in *mind*, a

slave rendered even more abject by the very tenure under which these possessions are held; and, *if* they veil from us this fact, or reconcile us to it, they are worse than worthless. The springs of emotion may be relaxed or destroyed within him; he may have little thought of the past, and less interest in the future. The great end and difficulty of life for men of all classes, and especially difficult for those who live by manual labour, is, a union of peace with innocent and laudable animation. Not by bread alone is the life of man sustained; not by raiment alone is he warmed; but by the genial and vernal inmate of the breast, which at once pushes forth and cherishes; by self-support and self-sufficing endeavour; by anticipations, apprehensions, and active remembrances; by joy and by love; by patience, because life wants not promises; by admiration; by gratitude, which habitually expands itself, for his elevation, in complacency towards his Creator¹."

V. Such is the language of the author to whom I have referred. Those remarks may be extended further. We need not only be on our guard against dangers affecting the exercise of the *Imagination* and other noble faculties of the Intellect, but we ought also to take good heed lest we suffer loss in our *Faith*.

By nature, we are all too prone to live and walk by *sight* rather than by *faith*². And this danger, always great and hazardous to the soul, is much aggravated when the eye is fascinated by a brilliant assemblage of material objects. The spiritual faculties are apt to be absorbed by them. We become idolaters of those things which minister to the *lust of the eye and the*

¹ W. Wordsworth, Essay on the Convention of Cintra, pp. 164, 165. Lond. 1809.

² 2 Cor. v. 7.

*pride of life*¹. We are enthralled in the prison-house of our senses. The *god of this world blindeth our eyes*²; we dote upon what we behold; and we *disbelieve* what we *cannot see*. Hence we become indifferent and callous to things divine and spiritual; we sink into a Sadducean scepticism concerning the invisible operations of divine grace, flowing in viewless and silent emanations on the soul, in Scripture, Prayer, and Sacraments. Thus, *professing ourselves wise, we become fools*³; boasting ourselves free, we become slaves; deeming ourselves strong, we dwindle into a puny and dwarfish imbecility; vaunting that we are enlightened, we grope in midnight darkness at noonday. Our ghostly Enemy knows this well. Therefore, when he tempted Christ, he shewed Him a Panorama of *all the kingdoms of the world* and the glories thereof. In the twinkling of an eye, like a flash of lightning, with a magical celerity far more marvellous than that with which this splendid Palace has risen, he conjured up a GREAT EXHIBITION of the glories of *All Nations*, and he said to the SON of GOD, *All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me*⁴.

Thus, my Brethren, he acts now. By means of the visible world, and all its dazzling allurements, he would beguile *us* into a trance of deadly apathy with regard to the invisible; by means of the temporal he would lull us into a deep sleep of oblivion of what is eternal. He would hide from our sight the Judgment-seat of Christ.

Let us be on our guard against him. Let us remember, that we can only judge of the present by light reflected from the future; and that we are morally

¹ 1 John ii. 16.

² 2 Cor. iv. 4.

³ Rom. i. 22.

⁴ Matt. iv. 9, and Luke iv. 5.

strong, in proportion as we realize the unseen things of Eternity. This is the Victory *which overcometh the world, even our Faith*¹; *the evidence of things not seen*². And we become feeble and debased in all that is great, noble, and enduring, in proportion as we dwell upon what is earthly and perishable. If we allow the World to fill our hearts with its gaudy imagery, our Hopes will languish, our Patience will decline, our Zeal will cool, our Faith will fade, our Courage will droop, our Love will pine away, and we shall become like blighted trees, or meagre skeletons, or lifeless machines; or, what is worse, like restless spirits, powerless except for evil. Let us, therefore, wean our affections from earth and its transitory vanities. Let us disengage ourselves from their entanglements. Let us emancipate ourselves from the golden chains with which the Tempter would bind our souls. Let us breathe the air of liberty and truth. Let us remember that here we are but *strangers and pilgrims*³, and sojourners for a short time. Let us dwell in the *unseen* world; let our home and our heart be there; let us meditate on its glories, compared with which all the objects that we see around us, however beautiful, are mere toys and baubles; hollow, vain, and unsatisfying; mere empty shadows and spectral illusions.

VI. Truth is one: and there is no kind of truth which is opposed to any other truth; there is no kind of knowledge, properly so called, which is contrary to any other knowledge; but rather, all truths and all sciences illustrate each other, and are all derived from One pure and exhaustless Source, the Wisdom of God.

It is not, therefore, (Heaven forbid!) it is not

¹ 1 John v. 4.

² Heb. xi. 1.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 11.

against Knowledge in any shape that you have now been cautioned. No, it is against its *abuse*. It is against Ignorance calling itself Knowledge. It is against the deification of what is human, and the denial of what is divine. It is against the subjection of spiritual things to secular, and of the infinite to the finite, and of eternal things to things temporal: it is against sanguine anticipations of results which will never be attained: and against confident reliance on aids which cannot but fail: it is against visionary dreams of earthly felicity, which are inconsistent with what Revelation teaches of human frailty and human corruption, and are irreconcilable with what divine Prophecy forewarns us to expect in the last ages of the world, and particularly in that period which may perhaps be now approaching, and which will precede the final consummation of all things. Scripture teaches us,—the Signs of the Times warn us—not to look for an Utopia—where we may see an Armageddon¹.

You have also been warned against taking a narrow view of the immense field of knowledge: against the low notion which mistakes a small part of it for the whole: against the substitution of perishable means for everlasting ends: against the love of effeminate comforts and enervating indulgences: against the idolatry of self. *Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*². You have been warned against the perils which thence arise to undermine the foundations of an enlarged and comprehensive patriotism, and to jeopardize the welfare of a State. You have been warned against the dangers which threaten the noblest faculties, moral, social, intellectual, and spiritual, with which man is endowed: and which

¹ Rev. xvi. 16.

² 2 Tim. ii. 3.

cannot be *rightly* developed except by the spirit, which was in Christ, the spirit which takes up the cross daily¹ and follows Him, the spirit of self-sacrifices. You have been cautioned against the withering influences which enfeeble our Imagination, and blight our Faith and Love; and, which, under the specious names of Civilization and Intelligence, inflict a deadlier blow on the true dignity of our nature than has ever been struck by the ruthless hand of the most savage barbarism.

VII. On the other hand, let us apply the requisite preventions by which these evils may be averted, and let us employ those means by which countervailing benefits may be secured.

The magnificent Spectacle which is now displayed to the eye of the world will either be a great blessing or a great bane. As we use it, so will it be to us, either pregnant with manifold dangers, or fraught with rich benefits. Therefore, let us extend our view, and look upwards; let us ascend in imagination from the splendours of earth to the glories of heaven; and from the marvels of time to the mysteries of Eternity.

To you who thus view this Spectacle with the eyes of Christians, it will be suggestive of sober thoughts as well as lofty imaginations. The Crystal Palace, as it is called, will, by the brilliance and fragility of the material with which it is constructed, serve as a fit emblem of the perishable nature of all, however splendid and dazzling, that is contained beneath its arching vault; and, indeed, of all that is embraced within the azure canopy of heaven. And this same Fabric, by its cross-like form, will remind you of its *religious* uses; it will be to you like a Christian Church, and preach to you divine truths.

¹ Matt. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34; x. 21. Luke ix. 23.

Let the eye of Faith be opened; then, as in some sculptured frieze¹, a continuous stream of figures is seen flowing onwards with an easy and steady course, in order to pay their homage to some Divinity seated at its close; or as in some triumphal procession, various Nations, represented by their respective attributes, preceded the car of the conqueror, riding on in imperial glory,—so, in this brilliant Spectacle, now open to the eye of all, the different Nations of the World will appear to be marshalled in a long array, in order to do honour to their Almighty King and Everlasting Conqueror, JESUS CHRIST. You will there see a prophetic anticipation of the glorious consummation which will one day be realized: *The kings of Tharsis and of the isles shall give presents; the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts*². *All kings shall bow down before Him, all Nations shall do Him service. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ*³. You will hear with the ear of faith a chorus of all Nations singing His praise.

Thus this earthly Palace will raise your minds to God, and extend your thoughts to Eternity. It will serve as an outer Court—a preliminary Vestibule—a subterranean Crypt, shadowing in dim twilight the ineffable glories of the *heavenly* Palace of the Great King. And, like the Patriarch of old, in his vision of Bethel—the House of God,—you will behold Angel Forms ascending and descending upon you, and you will exclaim with him, *Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven*⁴.

“A great city is a great solitude,”—so said one of old: it ought sometimes to be so. Let it be so to us;

¹ e. g. The Panathenaic.

² Ps. lxxii. 10.

³ Rev. xi. 15.

⁴ Gen. xxviii. 12—17.

and let us people this solitude with spiritual forms, and everlasting realities. It will be a profitable exercise of our spiritual faculties,—it will be a happy discipline of our faith,—when we have gazed our fill on those visible glories of the natural world, and on those material productions of man's intelligence and skill, which are displayed in rich abundance to our eyes in the long vista of the Industrial Palace, and in its lateral aisles, and lofty galleries, and broad transepts—it will then, I say, be a salutary exercise of our spiritual endowments, to remember that the *fashion of this world passeth away*¹. *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever*². *The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*³. *Vanity of Vanities, saith the Preacher, Vanity of Vanities; all is Vanity*⁴! All this gorgeous spectacle will be shifted like the scenes of a one night's Play. It will pass away like the fleeting glories of a summer cloud. Even the heavens above it *shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall they be folded up and be changed; but Thou, O Lord, art the same, and Thy years shall not fail*⁵. Therefore, it will be profitable to us to imagine the glories of this spectacle gradually fading from our sight, and melting into the air, and transfigured into a *spiritual* Temple.

And as we pass in imagination from the visible region of Sense into the invisible region of Faith, let us suppose ourselves laid *asleep in body*, and entranced like St. Paul, and carried up into *the third heaven*⁶; let us suppose ourselves now in the *celestial* Palace, which was revealed to the eyes of the beloved Dis-

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

² 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.

³ 1 John ii. 17.

⁴ Eccles. i. 2. 14; iii. 19; xi. 8; xii. 8.

⁵ Heb. i. 11, 12.

⁶ 2 Cor. xii. 2—4.

ciple St. John, let us imagine ourselves transported in the spirit to the heavenly City of *pure gold, like unto clear glass*¹, in the *light* of which *the Nations which are saved shall walk*, and the *Kings of the Earth will bring their glory and honour to it*². And let us behold its radiant jewels and precious stones glorious and imperishable, and let us see the aerial Rainbow over-arching the Throne of the Living God³, and the *crystal Sea*⁴ before the Throne, and the clear River, and the *Trees of Paradise, whose leaves are for the healing of the Nations*⁵, and let us behold an innumerable company of white-robed worshippers of all *Nations, and kindreds, and People, and Tongues*⁶, bearing Palms of Victory in their hands and crowns of gold on their heads. And let us hear angelic lyres attuned to everlasting Hallelujahs,—and let us remember, that the things which are seen by the *bodily eye are temporal*, but the *things which are not seen by it are eternal*⁷.

¹ Rev. xxi. 18. 21.

³ Ibid. iv. 3.

⁵ Ibid. xxii. 2.

² Ibid. xxi. 24.

⁴ Ibid. iv. 6.

⁶ Ibid. vii. 9.

⁷ 2 Cor. iv. 18.

SERMON XVIII.

ON THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF THE INDUSTRY OF ALL
NATIONS, 1851¹.

1 CHRON. xxix. 10—13.

Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. . . . Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all. . . . Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious Name.

In a previous Discourse it was my endeavour to suggest some considerations which might be available for the religious contemplation of that magnificent Spectacle which is now displayed to the eyes of the World in this Metropolis. . . . Let us now resume that topic.

This Spectacle is called "the Great Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations."

I. In it we behold, as it were, a temple of human Industry. . . . But what, let us ask, is Industry? what is Labour? It is the *end* of our Being? Doubtless, it is a necessary condition of it: for "if any will not *work*," says the Apostle, "neither let him *eat* ²." Doubtless also, as far as labour tends to the promotion

¹ Preached at Westminster Abbey (part in the morning and part in the afternoon) on Sunday, July 13, 1851.

² 2 Thess. iii. 10.

of God's glory and to the permanent welfare of man, it is nobly and usefully exercised. But, I repeat, is Industry the *end* of our being? Assuredly not. Even the Philosophy of Heathens¹ determined, that, although *Action* is necessary in this world, yet *Contemplation* is a higher State than Action. And the Contemplation of *divine* things is, or ought to be, the sum and end of human action.

We, also, my brethren, who have received a written Revelation from God, and have, therefore, a deeper insight than the Heathen had into this matter,—we know that *labour* is *imposed* on man as a *penalty* for *sin*. We know that it is a consequence of God's malediction pronounced on the human race for disobedience to His law: *Cursed is the ground, O man, for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*².

When, therefore, as now, we behold the results of human labour collected in a vast receptacle, we see indeed trophies of man's skill, but we see also monuments of his frailty, and stigmas of his shame. In a "Great Exhibition of the *Industry* of All Nations," we behold unquestionable evidence that All Nations are in a state of bondage, and under the ban of God's curse. However they may disguise the fact from themselves—however they may attempt to conceal it from others—they are toiling in the brick-kilns of Egypt. And *if* the Israelites of old might reasonably have exulted in building *treasure-cities for Pharaoh*³.

¹ Aristot. Ethic. x. 7. Compare Bacon, Adv. of Learning. i. p. 48.

² Gen. iii. 17. 19.

³ Exod. i. 11—14.

then may the Nations of the World idolize themselves, in exhibiting the works of their own hands.

But let us lift up our hearts. Let us remember that it was *not* one of the *Six days of Creation* which God blessed, but that it was the *Seventh Day* which He hallowed; it was the day in which He *rested* from his works, and *contemplated* the things which He had made¹. Let man imitate God. Let us not allow our souls to dwell in a sabbath-less Hexämeron² of earthly care and toil, as if this was our all in all. But let us look forward, and aspire to the heavenly consummation of the *seventh-day Rest*, which has no evening. . . . Let our thoughts tend thither as the port and haven of our earthly existence. Here, on earth, we *have no continuing city*; but let us seek one to come³; a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God⁴. Here, in this world, is *not our rest*⁵; but there remaineth a rest to the people of God⁶. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours⁷. Let us labour to enter into that rest; and let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it⁸. Then,—though in this world we lead laborious lives,—though, like God's people in Egypt, we *have lien among the pots*, yet shall we be hereafter as the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold⁹.

II. Again,—This vast aggregate of means and appliances, ministerial to man's comfort and enjoyment,

¹ Gen. ii. 2. Exod. xxxi. 17.

² The word used by the Christian Fathers to describe the Six Days of Creation.

³ Heb. xiii. 14.

⁴ Heb. xi. 10.

⁵ Micah ii. 10.

⁶ Heb. iv. 9.

⁷ Rev. xiv. 13.

⁸ Heb. iv. 1. 11.

⁹ Ps. lxxviii. 13.

appears to be regarded by some among us as a striking evidence of his *power*. In a certain sense, it is so. But let us not here indulge a vain-glorious spirit of self-adulation. These proofs of our *power* are proofs also of our *weakness*. It was said by a wise man of old, when he looked on the luxuries displayed in the rich mart of a great city: "How many things are here which I do *not* need!" Here was his *strength*, here was his wealth, here was his wisdom,—in *not* needing what others regarded as needful. . . . That man is a King, in the true sense of the word, to whom the necessities of life are luxuries; and that man is a Slave, to whom the luxuries of life are necessary.

When, therefore, we collect a vast multitude of objects subsidiary to our physical indulgence, what do we, in fact, but exhibit proofs of our own *dependence*, and consequent inferiority? and if we *boast* of them as our glory, we exult in *that* as our strength, which is indeed an argument of our weakness.

Let, therefore, our aspirations be checked; let our self-admiration be chastened with sober thoughts: *Having food and raiment let us be therewith content*¹. *Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath, for we brought nothing into this world; neither may we carry any thing out*².

III. Here, also, let us recollect that, amid all these beautiful objects, amid all these ingenious contrivances for procuring animal enjoyment, not one can restore peace to a troubled conscience,—not one can purchase a single moment of heavenly felicity. *It costs more to redeem our souls, so that we must let that alone for ever*³. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but Righteousness delivereth from death*⁴. *What shall it profit a man, if*

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 8.

³ Ps. xlix. 8.

² 1 Tim. vi. 6.

⁴ Prov. xi. 4.

he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, and be cast away¹? Therefore, when rich furniture, and splendid equipages, and pleasant pictures, and beautiful statues, and glass, and porcelain, and gay embroidery, and silks, and brocade and tapestry, dazzle the eye, let us remember that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth², and that there is One thing needful³; and that, if we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness⁴, all, and more than all, earthly delights shall be added unto us in heaven; that we shall enjoy pleasures and happiness such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive⁵: and that these may be ours for evermore,—if to contentment we add godliness. When the pearls and jewels of Indus and the East sparkle in our sight, let us recollect that there is One Pearl of great price⁶; that we can all seek and find it; and without it all else is dross: and that it matters little whether we be rich or poor in this world, if, in the Day when the Lord shall make up His jewels⁷, He shall say of us, Ye are mine.

IV. Yet more: It is not enough to say that these luxuries cannot profit us in the hour of trial. They may steal our hearts from God, and be a snare to our souls. *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God*⁸. The desire or enjoyment of these luxuries may engender evil thoughts and sinful passions; such as haughtiness, vain-glory, carelessness, and profaneness with regard to the things of Christ and His Church, covetousness, and many fool-

¹ Mark viii. 36. Luke ix. 25.

² Luke xii. 15.

³ Luke x. 42.

⁴ Matt. vi. 33.

⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

⁶ Matt. xiii. 46.

⁷ Mal. iii. 17.

⁸ Matt. xix. 24. Mark x. 23. Luke xviii. 24.

ish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition ¹.

Let all, therefore, whose hearts are set upon them, listen to the solemn warning of the Prophet: *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon couches; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music; that drink wine in bowls, but are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph* ². Hear, again, the words of the Prophet, speaking to the women of Israel: *Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; many days and years shall ye be troubled; tremble, ye women that are at ease* ³. And again: *Their land is full of silver and gold; their land is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots; the Day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is proud and lifted up, and he shall be brought low; and it shall be upon all the ships of Tarshish, and on all pleasant pictures* ⁴. And again: *Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,—because in their gait and apparel they offend God,—therefore the Lord will take away the bravery of their ornaments, the chains, the bracelets and the jewels, the glasses, and the rich and delicate dresses; and there shall be burning instead of beauty* ⁵.

V. Suffer me here to express a fear which is inspired by the sight of some among the Works of Art now displayed to the eye in this Exhibition.

The Fine Arts have a noble and sacred mission to the world. It is the sublime function of Sculpture and of Painting to soothe the soul, to purify the heart, to shed a grace on life, and to add beauty and dignity to Religion.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 9.

² Isa. xxxii. 9—11.

³ Isa. iii. 16—24.

⁴ Amos vi. 1—6.

⁵ Isa. ii. 7. 12. 16.

How forgetful are they of their high calling, how fallen from their high estate, whenever they offer food to voluptuous and sensual appetites, and purvey excitement to impure and unchaste desires! Then they cease to be angels of Light, and become ministers of the Evil One.

It is said, indeed, that if we apply such language as this to some works of modern Art, which we need not describe further, we ought also to condemn some of the most celebrated works of *ancient* Sculpture.

But by *whom*, let us ask, were those *ancient* works executed? By *heathens*; by persons who did *not* enjoy the light and grace vouchsafed to *us*, and who were tempted by the Evil One, and by their own corrupt hearts, to palliate their Vices by ascribing them to their gods.

Thus those *heathen* works teach us important truths. They warn us against the error of imagining, that any Artistic Skill can perform the functions of Divine Grace, and regenerate the World.

But we, my brethren, are Christians; therefore, let us live as such; *not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles that know not God*¹: *but crucifying the flesh with the lusts and affections thereof*². Let us *abstain from all appearance of evil*. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*³. *But without holiness no man shall see the Lord*⁴. *To be carnally minded is death*⁵. Let us produce nothing, let us countenance nothing which can suggest impure imaginations. Let us guard carefully the feminine delicacy, the virgin modesty, and chaste reserve, which is the source of our domestic virtue and domestic happiness. Here is the strength of England. Here is the spring of our national welfare.

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 5.

² Gal. v. 24.

³ 1 Thess. v. 22. Matt. v. 8.

⁴ Heb. xii. 14.

⁵ Rom. viii. 6.

If this source be sullied and polluted, we shall become poor indeed. Let us watch all attacks upon it, and endeavour to ward them off. Let us be careful how we tempt others to fall, especially the young, whose passions are warm; for it were better *that a millstone were hanged about our necks, and we cast into the sea*¹, than that we should offend one of them, and cause them to sin. Let us not do the work of the Tempter, but obey the Holy Spirit of God.

VI. Let us pass to another point.

Many there are who, in reading the annals of the world, are dazzled by the brilliance of the great nations of Antiquity, but do not remember the misery which lurked beneath the surface. They do not recollect the wretched condition of slaves which crowded their splendid capitals, and toiled to minister to their grandeur: they do not remember the degraded state in which woman existed there; they do not think of the deadly vices by which the vitals of society were devoured. They see a few resplendent names shining in the page of history, and their eyes are blinded by *their* lustre.

So, perhaps, it may be with us. We see magnificent results of human Industry. They look bright to the eye, and enchant us with their gay imagery. We see Names inscribed upon them, to which honours are awarded for the invention or execution of what we behold. But ought not our eyes to pierce beneath the surface? Do we think of those to whose hands these marvellous productions are mainly due? Do we follow in our thoughts the lonely miner, toiling for years in his subterranean grave? Do we sympathize with the artizan, panting at the heated furnace? Do we reflect on the vast crowds of mechanics collected in our fac-

¹ Matt. xviii. 6.

tories, and labouring at the loom? They have wrought what we see. But where are *their* names? Where are *their* prizes and honours? Will *they* ever be known to fame; will they shine in the page of history?

Yet more. Let us recollect also the expenditure, not only of physical force, but, must we not add, the exhaustion of social, moral, and intellectual power,—nay, and even the lavish squandering of the soul, by which those results have been obtained which now charm our eyes? Is not this spectacle gained for us at the sacrifice, too often, of their eternal happiness? And what, let me ask, have *we* done to alleviate these evils? what has been done by the masters of our great Factories, who are responsible in the eyes of God for the souls of those *within their gates*, and who derive honour and wealth from their labours? Have they discharged their duty to their operatives, by treating them—not as little better than machines—but as children of God, and as their own brethren in Christ?

These questions ought to be asked; we should be tampering with the Truth, we should be practising a fraud upon ourselves, and be traitors to Almighty God, if we shrunk from asking them. And if these questions must, with some noble exceptions, be answered, for the most part, in the affirmative, then our triumphs are tainted with shame, and our joy ought to be sobered with remorse, and chastened by repentance.

Yes, my brethren, if this be so, then, however brilliant these productions of our national Industry may appear in the sight of *man*, yet assuredly they cannot be pleasing to the eye of God. What is *highly esteemed among men* is then an *abomination in His sight*¹. If they have been produced by a spirit which sacrifices the interests of the soul to the indulgence of

¹ Luke xvi. 15.

sense, and which prefers earth to heaven, and time to Eternity, and the bondage of Mammon to the liberty of Christ,—then,—however delicate their texture, however vivid their colours,—the productions of our factories of lace, cotton, and of silk, will be regarded with as little favour by Him as the *hangings* woven for the *Groves* by the idolatrous women of Israel¹.

Let therefore this public display be to us an occasion of searching self-examination, and of stern self-discipline. Let the British Nation as a whole, and let Individuals in their proper spheres, examine the sources of our national wealth and national glory. Let us purify them where they are corrupt, and sanctify them where they are profane; let our Factories be regenerated by a large infusion of Christian faith and love. Then, and not till then, will their productions be beautiful, not only in the sight of man, but in the eye of God, Who *seeth not as man seeth*, and *trieth the heart*. They will be blessed by Him; they will be like the ornaments made by the women of Israel, who were *wise-hearted*², for the honour of God, and for the service of His Sanctuary.

VII. It has been observed already, that in this Industrial Cosmorama we do not see the names of many who have, perhaps, contributed most effectively to the production of the marvellous works which we there admire; and perhaps, in some cases, we see beautiful objects identified with the names of some who have had little share in their execution. Shall we censure this? No. Rather let us recognise here the common condition and ordinary fate of all things human. Let us derive salutary instruction from this fact. Let it remind us, that, by a necessary conse-

¹ 2 Kings xxiii. 7.

² Exod. xxviii. 3; xxxi. 6; xxxv. 25.

quence of human short-sightedness or human partiality,—which cannot, or will not, minutely analyze and justly discriminate the degree of honour due to individuals respectively, especially in composite productions,—praise and blame are very erroneously distributed in this life. Praise is withheld where it is due, and is not unfrequently bestowed most lavishly where it is least deserved; and censure is dispensed in the same manner. Let us, therefore, not aspire to this world's applause; let us not dote upon it as a solid good; let us not rely on it as a stedfast stay. Let us look forward and upward to the only Tribunal which exercises an all-scrutinizing cognizance over all the actions, and words, and thoughts of all men, and weighs them all with unerring accuracy, and which will one day pronounce judgment upon them with inflexible impartiality, according to the most rigid rule of distributive justice. In that Day, many of this World's verdicts will be rescinded and reversed. *Many that are first shall be last, and the last first*¹. We must all appear before *that* judgment-seat—the judgment-seat of CHRIST; and then, as our *work* has been, so will our *reward* be.

Let us therefore labour always, not as pleasing men, but as in the sight of our Great Task-Master. And then, however rarely noticed, however little known by the world our works may be,—yet we shall find that *the wise shall inherit glory*². We shall receive, not an earthly prize, but a *crown that fadeth not away*³; and our names will be inscribed, not on perishable tables, but in the *Book of Life*⁴.

VIII. Another consideration fitted to produce a just and modest estimate of ourselves is this:—

¹ Mark x. 31. Luke xiii. 30.

² Prov. iii. 35.

³ 1 Pet. v. 4.

⁴ Rev. xx. 12.

This Spectacle is called "the Great Exhibition of the Industry of *all Nations*." . . . Of *all Nations*? we enquire. Yes, it is replied, of all Nations *now* flourishing in the world. True; but where are the productions of those Nations which do *not* flourish *now*, but were *once* the most illustrious on the face of the Globe? Where, for example, are the Works of the Industry of Babylon, that *golden City*, formerly the *glory of kingdoms*, the *beauty of the Chaldees' excellency*, the *Queen of the whole earth*¹? Where are the fruits of her Hanging Gardens? where her pleasant Pictures, her variegated embroidery, her richly embossed vessels of silver and of gold? Where is the Merchandize of that once *joyous city*, Tyre, that *crowning City*, whose *Merchants were Princes*, and whose *Traffickers were the honourable of the earth*²? Where is her purple, scarlet, and fine linen? Where the riches of Egypt, woven in *fine flax of net-work*³?

We look for them in vain. They have passed away, as if they had never been.

What, therefore, are we thus taught? . . . That the life of Nations is like that of men. Their duration, compared with eternity, is as the morning dew, glistening for a while and then melting away: they fade and fall like the yellow leaves of autumn, or (to use another figure), after they have run awhile in the race of the World's History, and have borne the Torch of Knowledge in their hands, they deliver it up to some other Nation, and then they disappear, perhaps for ever, from the course⁴.

Therefore, looking at the past, let us be humble in the present, and let us prophesy with respect to the future.

¹ Isa. xiii. 19; xiv. 4.

² Ibid. xxiii. 8.

³ Ibid. xix. 9.

⁴ Lucret. ii. 76:

Augescunt aliæ Gentes, aliæ minuuntur;
Et quasi Cursores Vitæ lampada tradunt.

In this Great Exhibition, we see no record of the most celebrated Nations of Antiquity. And England, whose name was unknown to the language of Babylon and Tyre, holds the first place in this great Industrial Spectacle.

So hereafter, in the lapse of years, some *other* great Exhibition may be opened, in some distant Capital of the Western World, or in the now half-civilized regions of New Zealand, or amid the forests of Australia, and perhaps in *that future* Exhibition, the Name of England will not appear: no vestige of her Industry will be seen, to shew what she once was; and she may be to the future Nations of the world what Babylon is to us,—a visionary shadow of the past.

Let us therefore not be *high-minded*, but *fear*¹. Let us remember, why Babylon fell. Because,—as the prophet said to the king, *the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, thou hast not glorified*². Let us serve and adore HIM Who plucketh up and planteth Nations³. If we desire to be spared a longer continuance and an extended prosperity on the earth, let us *not* pursue our present course; let us not treat error as truth⁴, and truth as error.

¹ Rom xi. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

² Dan. v. 23.

³ Jer. xviii. 7.

⁴ *e. g.* as in proposing to admit Jews to the Legislature. Judaism, as designed by God, was a *schoolmaster to bring men to Christ* (Gal. iii. 24). But, as it is *now*, it is a *denial* of the fundamental articles of Christianity. It affirms that the Ever Blessed Saviour of the World was a Deceiver and Blasphemer. If a Nation confers legislative power and privilege on those who profess Judaism, it contravenes the designs of Him Who gave the Law from Mount Sinai; it virtually denies Christ's Sovereignty over the World, or presumes to hope that a Nation may expect His favour and blessing, when it concedes honour to those who deny and revile Him. It is alleged, indeed, that to exclude Jews from the Legislature, on the ground of their religion, is an act of *persecution*. If it is an act of

Let us serve CHRIST as a Nation, with the public homage of our National Acts. For He has said, that *Righteousness exalteth a Nation*¹. *Them that honour Me I will honour, but they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed*². *The Kingdom which will not serve Him shall perish*³. *He removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings*⁴.

IX. Again. We may derive a lesson of meekness and of wisdom from a consideration of the perishableness of Nations and National Institutions, compared with physical powers, even the most insignificant.

What a lively interest attaches itself to the name of Greece, and especially to that of Athens. What a prominent part has she played in the history of the

persecution to exclude persons from legislative power on the ground of Religion, it was a greater act of persecution to *deprive* a family of the Crown on the ground of Religion. . . . The admission of Jews to Parliament appears to approach very nearly to a denial of the moral right of the House of Brunswick to the throne of England. The English Romanists know this well—and they among them who prefer the Supremacy of their own Church to all other considerations may be expected to act accordingly.

¹ Prov. xiv. 34.

² 1 Sam. ii. 30.

³ Isa. lx. 12.

⁴ Dan. ii. 21. May I be permitted to add, that a question here suggests itself. What will be the application of the resources accruing from the Great Exhibition? Will they be employed to create any public work, expressive of reverence and thankfulness to the Almighty Ruler of the World, and the All-merciful Giver of all Good? Here will be a test of the spirit which animates us as a Nation. A Prayer at the opening of the Exhibition, without a practical result of Gratitude to God at the close of it, would be too much like that lip-service which was eschewed by the pious King of Israel, who said, *I will not offer unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing* (2 Sam. xxiv. 24). May He preserve the Nation from this mockery, and enable it to use aright this glorious opportunity of magnifying Him!

world. How extensive was her Commerce, how valiant her prowess, how victorious her armies, how renowned her Arts, her Eloquence, and her Laws. And how is she now represented in this Synod of Nations? A few slabs of Marble, drawn from the Quarries of Pentelicus; a few Jars of Honey from the thyme-clad slopes of Hymettus, are her contributions to the Great Exhibition. While her population has been subject to various vicissitudes, while her civil Institutions have been often changed by successive revolutions, and while scarce a vestige remains of her former maritime glory, the humble community of the Bees murmuring among the purple flowers in the lonely dells of the Athenian Mountain, have pursued their peaceful labours, undisturbed by chance or change, from generation to generation, for more than twenty centuries; and the natural veins of her limestone hills teem in exhaustless abundance with their snow-white marble, as fresh as when more than two thousand years ago those noble fabrics of Athens,—the Temple of Theseus, the Parthenon, and the Propylæa,—arose in stately majesty from the Pentelic Quarry, and the Pan-athenaic Frieze, sculptured by the chisel of Phidias, issued from the silent chambers of the rock.

So perhaps it may be with ENGLAND. The time may come when the din of human industry may cease within her borders; and then it will appear how transitory and fleeting are the efforts of *man*, and how short-lived is *his* glory, contrasted even with inanimate powers, or with those of irrational creatures, and vegetable life.

When the Mills of Manchester are silent, and the Forges of Birmingham echo no more; when the Furnaces of Glasgow are extinct, and the Docks of Liverpool are untenanted; when few vessels of commerce or of war may be seen floating on the bosom of the

Thames and in the Harbours of England; when some of the Streets of London may be overgrown with grass, or almost choked with sand, then, in some foreign Exhibition, in some distant clime, in some future age,—the wealth and glory of Britain may be represented, not (as now) by the produce of her smoking factories, but by some lowly herbs culled in her woods or meadows, or at the side of her winding brooks, or by the mineral produce of her native hills.

X. Let us hence learn wisdom, which is the mother of humility.

Let us not confine our view to the narrow and petty range of our own age. Let us liberate ourselves from the trammels of time, and attempt, as far as our feeble powers enable us, to realize the imaginative Omnipresence of HIM in Whose intellectual image and likeness we were created, and to whom a *thousand Years are but as one Day*¹.

There is no death to the soul. Not one of us will ever cease to exist. Let us, therefore, project our thoughts into the distant ages of the future, and endeavour to look on this Spectacle, not with the purblind vision of Ephemerals sporting for a brief season in the sunshine of summer hours, but with the feelings with which we *shall* hereafter regard it from the intellectual and spiritual altitude of our *future* existence. Let us endeavour to view it with the eyes of Saints in Paradise, and with the mind of Angels in Heaven, and of God Himself. Then, and then only, shall we view it aright.

XI. This world is of short duration, and it is our passage to Eternity. Mechanical powers and material re-

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 8.

sources *cannot* affect our *everlasting* condition: they have no efficacy beyond the Grave. Our eternal happiness depends *not* on *them*, but on our exercise of Christian virtues. And *that* eternal happiness, to which those Virtues lead us, being a state of happiness designed for *intelligent* beings, will be doubtless a state of *Knowledge*. And *that* Knowledge will be angelic. For, says our Lord, they who are *counted worthy to attain that world shall be equal to the Angels*¹. Their intellectual faculties will be expanded, and the whole Mechanism of the Universe will be opened to their view. They will *see God as He is*². *That* will, indeed, be a glorious revelation, compared with which all human Knowledge on earth is but like the glimmering of a feeble taper contrasted with the splendour of the midday Sun. And to *that* view none will be admitted,—however celebrated for knowledge in this world,—if they have not *consecrated* their Knowledge by faith and love of CHRIST. Christianity, therefore, is the true School of Science; and Unbelief is the mother of Ignorance. The humblest peasant, who adores Christ, will enjoy everlasting Visions of the most sublime Philosophy, from which the *wise* and *prudent* of this world will be excluded, and be *cast into outer darkness*³. If, therefore, we love Knowledge, let us worship Christ: in *His light we shall see light*⁴.

XII. Again; in this Industrial Exhibition, we see various compartments inscribed with the names of various Nations: we have a cosmopolitan Chart of the world's Industry unrolled before our eyes. We see

¹ Luke xx. 36. Matt. xxii. 30. Mark xii. 25.

² 1 John iii. 2.

³ Matt. xi. 25. Luke x. 21. Matt. viii. 12; xxv. 30.

⁴ Ps. xxxvi. 9.

also the names of various Artificers, whose works are presented to our view; we are then led to dwell on the fortunes of the Country, and the skill of the workmen which have contributed these noble productions. To a certain extent this sensation is just and reasonable. *Let us praise famous men, says the wise Son of Sirach, and our Fathers that begat us. The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through His great power from the beginning; Such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing*¹. And again, though he says that they who excel in mechanical arts, and who *trust to their hands, and are wise in their work, shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation, nor be found where Parables are spoken*; yet, he adds, that *without these cannot a city be inhabited, and they will maintain the state of the world, and their desire is in the work of their craft*².

Let it not be forgotten, also, that the Holy Spirit has not omitted to commemorate in Holy Scripture the name of him who was the first *Instructor of every artificer in brass and iron*³. He has also recorded who was *the Father of such as handle the harp and organ*. Yet, this being allowed, we must rise higher. Who, we must ask, poured out all this wealth on the world? God. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth*⁴. . . . *The Earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*⁵. Who, again, enables man to elaborate the productions of art from the treasures of nature?—God. He created man in His own image, and endued him with a portion of His own creative power and skill. *We are the clay, He is the Potter*⁶, to mould and fashion

¹ Ecclus. xliv. 1—5.

² Gen. iv. 21, 22.

³ Ps. xxiv. 1. 1 Cor. x. 26.

⁴ Ecclus. xxxviii. 27—34.

⁵ Ps. xxxiii. 6.

⁶ Isa. lxiv. 8.

as He wills. He breathed the spirit of wisdom into Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man of the ancient world¹. *He maketh the understanding to abound like Euphrates, and as Jordan in the time of Harvest*².

Therefore let our hearts mount upward. The Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations is an Exhibition of the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of GOD. Let us not substitute the creature for the Creator. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise*³. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all*⁴. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created*⁵. Now, therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name⁶. Let all the world sing a *Te Deum*. Let us invite all Creation to join us in adoring HIM: *O all ye Works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever*.

Here upon earth we see only the skirts of God's Glory⁷: we touch the hem of His Garment only. *These are parts of His ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him*⁸! In His sight the inhabitants of the earth are but as *Grasshoppers*⁹. *Behold, the Nations are but as a drop in a bucket, and as the small dust in the balance; and He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing. All Nations before Him are as nothing; they are accounted as less than nothing, and as vanity*¹⁰. The

¹ Exod. xxxv. 30. 34; xxxvi. 1.

² Eccles. xxiv. 26.

⁴ 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.

⁶ 1 Chron. xxix. 13.

⁸ Job xxvi. 14.

¹⁰ Isa. xl. 15—17.

³ Ps. cxv. 1.

⁵ Rev. iv. 11.

⁷ Exod. xxxiii. 23.

⁹ Isa. xl. 22.

*Lord is in His Holy Temple: let all the Earth keep silence before Him*¹.

However glorious, then, may appear the Spectacle now before us, yet let us remember it is of little account when compared with the rest of the creation of God. How insignificant is the *Industry* of all the nations of the earth, how insignificant are *All Nations* themselves, and how insignificant is the earth which they inhabit, when contrasted with the innumerable *stars of heaven*; and how insignificant are the *stars of heaven*, when compared with the marvels and mysteries of the world invisible, the countless legions of Angels, and the Palace of the Living God, and the attributes of God Himself!

If, then, we are dazzled by the splendour of this Exhibition, which is but a small fragment of glass—a mere pebble upon the sea-shore of the boundless Ocean of God's infinite power and wisdom,—how should we be entranced if we could see all His works as they really are, and could behold HIM as He is! . . . And this, thanks be to Him,—if we serve Him aright on earth,—we shall do for ever in heaven.

XII. Lastly, He by whom all things were made is CHRIST, Who died for us. *By Him all things were made, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him*². He who created all things stretched His Hands upon the cross for our sakes. And He will come again, to judge the quick and dead. Then *every eye shall see Him, they also which pierced Him*³. How wonderful is His

¹ Hab. ii. 20.

² John i. 3. Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 10.

³ Rev. i. 7.

power, how astonishing His condescension, how awful His Majesty, how adorable His love !

Let us therefore *fall low on our knees before His footstool*, and adore CHRIST, our Creator, our Saviour, our King, and our Judge. Let us look forward with godly fear to that solemn hour, when all these things which we see will fade away, when all the glories of the visible creation will be dissolved, when *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up*¹ ; and the SON of MAN shall appear in the clouds of heaven with great glory, and the Holy Angels with Him ; and before Him shall be gathered ALL NATIONS ; and *He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats ; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left ; and these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal*².

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 10.

² Matt. xxv. 32—46.

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